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Speech at Flinders Hotel, Port Augusta, Luncheon

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, AT FLINDERS HOTEL, PORT
AUGUSTA, LUNCHEON. OCTOBER 1, 1971.

YOUR WORSHIP, MR. KENEALLY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

IT'S A PLEASURE TO BE BACK IN PORT AUGUSTA AND TO BE ABLE TO GREET OLD FRIENDS. AND I WANT TO MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR AT THE OUTSET THAT IT WAS ENTIRELY FORTUITOUS THAT MY FIRST OFFICIAL CALL IN YOUR CITY TODAY WAS AT THE LOCAL JAIL. IT WAS ONLY AN INSPECTION VISIT.

MY MAIN PURPOSE IN COMING HERE IS TO MEET AND TALK WITH AS MANY LOCAL PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE AND TO GET TO KNOW, AT FIRST HAND, SOMETHING OF YOUR CURRENT PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS.

AT THE SAME TIME, I'M TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY OF LOOKING OVER VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS HERE AND AT WHYELLA. AND IT IS ABOUT THE GENERAL FIELD OF DEVELOPMENT, AND INVOLVEMENT BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT, THAT I WANT TO TALK TODAY.

THERE IS NO MORE IMPORTANT JOB FOR ANY STATE GOVERNMENT THAN THE MAINTENANCE OF ADEQUATE EMPLOYMENT.

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I HAVE A SPECIAL INTEREST IN THIS AS MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION, TOURISM, HOUSING AND MINING AND I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN HEARING ABOUT THE PROGRAMMES TO ACHIEVE THIS WHICH WE HAVE INITIATED SINCE OUR RETURN TO OFFICE LAST YEAR.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, LIMITS TO THE ACTIONS WHICH ANY STATE GOVERNMENT CAN TAKE. THE STATES ARE HALSTRUNG BY THE PRESENT FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THEM AND THE COMMONWEALTH AND BY DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON ECONOMIC AND FISCAL MATTERS. (I MIGHT ADD HERE THAT I THINK IT MOST DISTURBING THAT THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO CONTEMPLATE, WITH APPARENT EQUANIMITY, AN UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL OF 100-THOUSAND OR MORE).

BUT, DESPITE THE CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED BY THE PRESENT FEDERAL STRUCTURE, THERE IS ~~xxxx~~ MUCH THAT THE STATES CAN DO TO STIMULATE DEVELOPMENT AND, AS A CONSEQUENCE, THE NUMBER OF JOBS AVAILABLE.

PROBABLY THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WE, AS A STATE, FACE ECONOMICALLY IS OUR OVER-DEPENDENCE ON THE MANUFACTURE OF MOTOR CARS AND OTHER CONSUMER GOODS AND THE VULNERABILITY THAT STEMS FROM THIS TO ANY FLUCTUATION IN THE DEMAND FOR THESE GOODS IN DOMESTIC MARKETS.

A SECOND PROBLEM, AND ONE OF GROWING URGENCY, IS THE RELATIVE SCARCITY OF EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN AND SCHOOL LEAVERS.

THESE WERE THE UNDERLYING CONCERNS WHICH LED TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WE FORULATED AT THE LAST ELECTION AND WHICH WE ARE NOW IMPLEMNTING. WE HAVE THREE MAIN AIMS: THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DECENTRALISATION AND DIVERSIFICATION: THE WIDENING OF THE MARKETS AVAILABLE FOR OUR PRODUCTS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THOSE INDUSTRIES, SUCH AS TOURISM, CAPABLE OF THE MOST RAPID EXPANSION AND LIKELY TO PROVIDE JOBS FOR A WIDER RANGE OF THE WORKFORCE.

HERE IN PORT AUGUSTA YOU'LL NATURALLY BE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN OUR PROGRAMME FOR DECENTRALISATION. IT IS OUR FIRM POLICY TO PROVIDE INDUSTRIALISTS WITH EVERY POSSIBLE INCENTIVE TO LOCATE NEW PLANT AND FACTORIES ELSEWHERE THAN IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

WE CAN'T FORCE THEM TO DO SO, BUT WE CAN ENCOURAGE THEM BY EXHORTATION AND INDUCEMENT. THE OFFICERS OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BRANCH OF MY DEPARTMENT IN THEIR PUBLICITY

MATERIAL AND IN PERSONAL CONTACTS WITH POTENTIAL INVESTORS LAY VERY GREAT STRESS ON THE ADVANTAGES OFFERED BY NON-ADELAIDE LOCATIONS SUCH AS THE GULF TOWNS. WE ARE WELL AWARE, THOUGH, THAT URGING PEOPLE ISN'T ENOUGH. WE HAVE NOW SET UP AN INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE CORPORATION WHOSE JOB IT IS TO HELP INDUSTRIES, BY WAY OF LOANS OR GRANTS, AND THE EARLY, AND OFTEN CRUCIAL, STAGE OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT.

OVERALL, AN ORGANISATION SUCH AS THIS CAN PLAY A VALUABLE ROLE IN ATTRACTING TO ~~XXXX~~ SOUTH AUSTRALIA FIRMS UTILISING THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES BEING DEVELOPED HERE AND OVERSEAS AND BUILDING ON THE POOL OF HIGH-SKILL MANPOWER WE HAVE AVAILABLE.

MORE SPECIFICALLY, AND THIS WAS ESPECIALLY WRITTEN INTO THE LEGISLATION WHEN IT WAS DRAFTED, THE CORPORATION IS EMPOWERED TO MAKE GRANTS - RATHER THAN LOANS - TO FIRMS WHICH ARE ESTABLISHED BEYOND THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

THE CORPORATION IS STILL IN ITS INFANCY. BUT I AM CONFIDENT IT WILL PROVE ITSELF TO BE A POWERFUL WEAPON IN THE DECENTRALISATION ARMOURY.

ANOTHER AGENCY WHICH WE ARE USING AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO FOSTER DECENTRALISATION IS THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN HOUSING TRUST, THROUGH ITS LEASE-BACK FACTORY BUILDING PROGRAMME. THE TRUST NOW HAS A HEAVIER DEMAND ON ITS RESOURCES FOR FACTORY DEVELOPMENT THAN AT ANY TIME IN ITS HISTORY AND I ASSURE YOU THAT ANY INDUSTRIALIST THINKING OF SETTING UP IN THE GULF TOWNS OR ELSEWHERE IN OUR COUNTRY CENTRES GETS A VERY SYMPATHETIC HEARING. THAT'S ONE ASPECT OF OUR CURRENT PROGRAMME.

IN ORDER TO BROADEN THE OUTLETS FOR OUR PRODUCTS AND REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCE ON THE DOMESTIC MARKET THE GOVERNMENT HAS LAUNCHED A VIGOROUS EXPORT DRIVE.

WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO. BUT ALREADY, IN LITTLE OVER A YEAR, WE ARE GETTING VERY ENCOURAGING RESULTS.

ONE OF THE PRIMARY PURPOSES OF MY VISITS TO EUROPE AND SOUTH EAST ASIA EARLIER THIS YEAR WAS TO EXAMINE NEW MARKET POSSIBILITIES. BUT FLYING VISITS ARE NOT ENOUGH AND, TO GAIN THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE PENETRATION, THE GOVERNMENT HAS APPOINTED TRADE AGENTS IN SINGAPORE, TOKYO, HONG KONG AND DJAKARTA.

IN ADDITION WE HAVE ROVING TRADE AMBASSADORS SERVICING EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ASIAN AREAS. THEIR JOB - AND THEY WORK SPECIFICALLY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA RATHER THAN HAVING A NATIONAL BRIEF - IS TO HUNT OUT NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES, TELL BUSINESSES HERE ABOUT THEM AND THEN PROVIDE THE FIRMS HERE WITH ASSISTANCE IN CAPTURING AND CONSOLIDATING THE NEW OUTLETS. THIS IS A PROJECT WHICH HAS ACQUIRED A GREATER IMPERATIVE SINCE THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF BRITAIN'S LIKELY ENTRY INTO EUROPE. THERE CAN BE DOUBT OF THE ENORMOUS POTENTIAL OFFERED BY THE COUNTRIES IN OUR REGION FOR MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TRADE. YOU'VE ONLY TO SEE THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN BUSINESS VISITORS MAKING THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE BUSINESS HOUSES THERE TO REALISE THAT.

WE ARE IN A PARTICULARLY ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION TO BUILD ON THIS AND OUR POLICY IS GEARED TOWARDS ENSURING THAT WE DO SO. THERE ARE TWO OTHER WAYS IN WHICH WE ARE FOSTERING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS MADE INCREASED GRANTS FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN. THE MONEY IS BEING USED TO PROVIDE CREATIVE DESIGNERS WHO CAN ADVISE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FIRMS ON WAYS TO IMPROVE THEIR PRODUCTS AND MAKE THEM MORE COMPETITIVE IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETS. A GLANCE AT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SWEDISH AND ITALIAN INDUSTRY SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO PERSUADE THE MOST ARDENT SKEPTIC OF THE VALUE OF GOOD DESIGN. SECONDLY, WE ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING AN INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO CO-ORDINATE PRODUCT RESEARCH SO THAT SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FIRMS HAVE AVAILABLE KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO ADJUST PROCESSING TECHNIQUES TO MEET DEMANDS FOR NEW PRODUCTS OR TO GAIN NEW MARKETS.

IN ALL THIS, WE ARE NOT SEEKING DEVELOPMENT FOR ITS OWN SAKE OR BECAUSE WE ARE INTENT ON SWELLING CORPORATE PROFILES. WE WANT NEW INDUSTRIES AND NEW MARKETS BECAUSE THEY BRING NEW JOBS AND GREATER PROSPERITY FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WORKERS.

IT IS FOR PRECISELY THE SAME REASON THAT THE STATE GOVERNMENT IS NOW GIVING GREAT EMPHASIS TO OUR TOURIST POTENTIAL.

AN AWFUL LOT OF NONSENSE HAS BEEN TALKED ABOUT THIS SINCE WE ANNOUNCED THE OUTLINE OF OUR PLANS. WE HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF PUTTING ~~EX~~ CIRCUSES BEFORE BREAD AND INDULGING IN UNNECESSARY AND EXPENSIVE FRILLS. NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH. IT WAS ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO THAT THE SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT WAS DESPERATELY WORRIED ABOUT ITS ECONOMIC FUTURE FOLLOWING THE BRITISH FORCES' PULL-OUT. SINCE THEN, AS A RESULT OF DELIBERATE GOVERNMENT POLICY, THERE HAS BEEN AN EXPLOSION IN THE TOURIST AREA. HOTELS HAVE BEEN BUILT, AND ARE STILL BEING BUILT, AT A DRAMATIC RATE. BY THE END OF THIS DECADE THERE WILL BE MORE THAN 13-THOUSAND FIRST CLASS HOTEL BEDS ON THE ISLAND.

THIS MARATHON EFFORT HAS BEEN BACKED BY TRAINING SCHEMES FOR HOTEL AND ASSOCIATED STAFF, A BOOM IN JOB AVAILABILITY AND IT HAS MEANT THAT - COUPLED WITH INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION - SINGAPOREANS NOW LOOK FORWARD TO A FUTURE OF CONTINUING PROSPERITY.

THERE IS NO REASON WHY SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SHOULD NOT ACHIEVE EQUALLY SPECTACULAR RESULTS. BUT, IF WE ARE TO DO SO, WE MUST PROVIDE THE INFRASTRUCTURE NECESSARY TO ATTRACT INTERSTATE AND OVERSEAS VISITORS. SO, BY PROVIDING THE PERFORMING ARTS FACILITIES, TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AND FIRST CLASS HOTEL ACCOMMODATION WE ARE PROVIDING A MORE STABLE BASIS FOR EMPLOYMENT. TOURISM POTENTIALLY OFFERS US THE GREATEST EXPANSION IN TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT AND IT WOULD BE SHEER POLLY IF WE WERE TO IGNORE IT. IT IS, MOREOVER, A BENIGN INDUSTRY. AT A TIME WHEN PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD ARE, RIGHTLY, BECOMING MORE CONSCIOUS OF THE PERILS OF AN ENVIRONMENT POLLUTED BY RECKLESS INDUSTRIALISATION TOURISM IS NOT ONLY POLLUTION-FREE BUT, IN FURTHERING APPRECIATION OF NATURAL BEAUTY, THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS AND THE LIKE, IT IS A POSITIVE FORCE FOR CONSERVATION.

DEVELOPMENT IN THIS FIELD WILL BENEFIT ALL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA. OBVIOUSLY THE BAROSSA VALLEY WILL HOST MORE ~~VISITORS~~ VISITORS THAN THE PORT PIRIE SMELTERS. BUT THE WHOLE STATE WILL GAIN DIRECT AND INDIRECT BENEFITS FROM INCREASED TOURIST SPENDING.

PORT AUGUSTA, AS THE GATEWAY TO THE FLINDERS RANGES, IS WELL SITUATED TO GAIN IMMEDIATE BENEFITS. THE FLINDERS HAVE ALREADY GAINED NATIONAL RECOGNITION AS A TOURIST AREA AND THIS IS ONE OF THE REGIONS ON WHICH STATE TOURISM PLANNING WILL BE CONCENTRATED. THEIR POTENTIAL WAS RECOGNISED IN THE RECENT SURVEY BY THE STATE PLANNING AUTHORITY WHICH ~~THE~~ STATED THAT IT WAS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S BEST ECONOMIC INTERESTS THAT THEY SHOULD BE CONSERVED AND THEIR APPEAL TO VISITORS SHOULD BE MAXIMISED.

IF PORT AUGUSTA IS TO SECURE ITS PROPER SHARE OF SUCH DEVELOPMENT THEN THERE WILL BE A NEED FOR AN UP-GRADING OF HOTEL AND RELATED FACILITIES, SUCH AS RESTAURANTS.

THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW, TOGETHER WITH INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES, MAKING PLANS FOR TRAINING FACILITIES TO ACHIEVE THIS.

THESE THEN ARE SOME OF THE AREAS IN WHICH WE ARE WORKING.

WE BELIEVE THAT A PROGRAMME SUCH THIS, TOGETHER WITH OUR ENDEAVOURS IN CONSERVATION, EDUCATION, HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, CAN PROVIDE FOR THE EFFECTIVE, CO-ORDINATED DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STATE WITH BENEFITS SHARED BY ALL SOUTH AUSTRALIANS.

THANK YOU

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